

Passive Obedience, Stated and Asserted.

IN A

N^o 3

S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At Amptbill in Bedfordshire,

Upon Sunday, Septemb. 9. 1683.

Being the Day of

T H A N K S G I V I N G

F O R T H E

Discovering and Defeating

The Late Treasonable

C O N S P I R A C Y


A G A I N S T

His Sacred Majesties Person and Government.

BY

THO. POMFRET, A.M. Rector of *Amptbill*, and Chaplain
to the Right Honourable ROBERT Earl of *Ailesbury*.

L O N D O N :

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MEMORANDUM

For the use of the Committee



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Christ Church, 1881

To the Right Honourable

ROBERT

Earl of Ailesbury,

One of the Lords of his Majesties most
Honourable Privy-Council.

My Lord,

Could I have taken the Confidence to have disputed your Commands, this Discourse would not have needed that Protection, and Favour, which now it humbly begs. Not but that I am well assured, the Doctrines in it are truly Christian, but it is sent forth into an ill natur'd, and Plotting Age, that will not give tolerable entertainment to any Principles but such as invite to Apostacy, and Rebellion. It is not therefore without extream Necessity, that I press to Your Lordship, in this Dedication; the very asserting Primitive Religion, and Christian Loyalty, will need such a Patron. And though it is no Secret to the World, yet I cannot forbear declaring that I

cannot have such a Defender as Your Self, who does so generously practise both those Vertues. I have seen in Your Lordship such Concernment for the Crown, and the Establish'd Religion, that I might presume of Patronage; But I must beseech Your Pardon too, that I present this, (of which I have so mean an Opinion my self) to a Person for whom of all men, I have the greatest Honour, and from whom I have received the greatest Obligations. But You loved the Subject, and therefore liked the Sermon, no Man ever having better joyned the Christian and the Statesman. And truly (my Lord) I have been entertained with the greatest Delight as well as Advantage, in Your own Discourses of Loyalty, that it self in You being founded upon Principles truly Noble and Brave; not living upon future Expectances, but serving Your Prince, as You do Your God, by the Engagements of pure Love, and undesigning Vertue: And therefore in all Changes You was always Your Self, no Change of State making You change Your Party. This is removed as far from Untruth, as it is from Flattery, that You can no more forsake Your King nor Your Religion, than You

*can Your Self, being one that values not Your Fortune,
nor Your Greatness, above Your Vertues. And as
to this, all men that know You will allow the Cha-
racter, so it is my happiness, as well as interest, that
I can testifie it by a daily Experience, having the
honour of being*

My Lord,

Your Lordships most humble

and obedient Chaplain,

Tho. Pomsfret.

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S E R M O N
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I. S. P E T. ii. 20, 21.

But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called.

IT is not unknown to any man who has heard the Sermons, or read the Books, or remembers the Practices of all sorts of Dissenters from the *Church of England*, but that they have been a People not only the most ungovernable, but also the most destructive to the Peace, and Dignity, and Lives of Princes. It cannot therefore be any thing strange, to hear by the King's *Declaration*, of a Conspiracy plotted against His own Life and Government, since it is by such, whose very Principles do so naturally tend to Sedition, and Bloud. And tho' indeed by God's wonderful Providence, His Majesty hath been hitherto deliver'd from the Malicious, Unchristian, and

and cruel Designs of these men ; yet I cannot see, without a continuation of Miracles, how it is possible for our Government and Religion, to be render'd in any degree safe, unless such *Positions* be rooted out, and renounced, which plainly lead to disturb and ruin Kingdoms. For since the Supreme Power, is both by Gods express Order, and the consent of all Nations, absolute and unaccountable ; if you once take the Sword out of the Magistrate's hand, and put it into the Peoples, that Nation is presently in a state of War, and every man may thrust his dagger into his Neighbours side, if he has a stronger Arm, and a more bloody mind. To prevent this ; by Gods Ordinance, and the agreement of all Commonwealths, the Supreme Power *only* is to bear the Sword, and *that* to defend every mans Right, but no man to rise up, *upon any Pretence whatsoever* against *that*. A conclusion this, that is founded by God and Nature, Reason and Religion, and has been consented to by all good Christians, and wiser Heathens.

But some hot and troublesome men amongst us, given up to Rage and Ambition, have torn up the Foundations of Peace and Government, and will endure neither Kings, nor their Laws ; but hate their Power, and would violate their Persons to bring in their own Devices, and inlarge their

their Granteurs. Nay, and that Christianity it self, which is the greatest obligation in all the World, to Peace and Obedience, might have no effect towards the preservation of Gods Vice-Gerents; they will make the Christian Religion, the pretence to Rebellion, and for the concernments of God, practise directly opposite to all his Commandments: and amongst the rest, evidently against this of the Text, where we are injoynd to suffer, though it be for doing well. *Passive Obedience*, which is a patient and mild suffering the hard, and unjust usages of Kings, being both the Christians duty, and profession; that at once he might possess his mind in patience, and secure the Publick Quiet.

But this meek and Christian Principle, was of late called to an account; and by Arguments of railery and contempt, indeavoured to be hooted out of the World; and represented to be mean and base, tamely to suffer evil, and far more honourable to be inroll'd amongst the *Banditi*, and *Russians*, than in the Catalogue of *Martyrs*.

And accordingly to give the more confidence to their horrid plot, the *Chaplain*, and the *Goliath* of the Conspiracy was sent forth to bid defiance, to God, and the King, and the whole Army of *Martyrs*; and to tell the World, that his Masters were men of that mettle, that with his own

Julian, they would turn Apostates to all Religion, and rather than suffer as Christians, confederate in Treason. Upon this principle their wicked Design proceeded, and therefore it is but needful that it be consider'd, and for the future (if possible) prevented: which I shall endeavour from the Text; where we have a passive Obedience commended; God's acceptance of it; and our own calling to it. Which I shall render more plain in these following Propositions.

I. *That as Christians, we are bound to do well, though we suffer.*

II. *When we do well, and suffer for it, we must take it patiently.*

III. *If we do well, and according to the Christian Rule, we will rather suffer patiently than resist the power by which we suffer.*

IV. *That as all these are acceptable to God, so to them all, we are call'd by our Religion: it is both the duty, and end of our Christian Vocation.*

I. *That we must do well, though we suffer for it. And indeed having this Conscience, that we do*

do well, it will be eaſie to ſuffer the utmoſt that we fear, or the worſt that men threaten : keep the Conſcience but clear of guilt, and the ſuffering though it bring ſmart, can do us no miſchief. Only here, both the Prudence and Innocence, of a Chriſtian does require, that we bring not ſuffering upon our ſelves for evil doing. A caution S. Peter, thought neceſſary, that the ſufferings of his time might be truly Chriſtian. 1 Ep. iv. 15. *But let none of you ſuffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evil-doer, or as a Buſy-body in other mens matters.* All Evils as they have their proper and legal Remedies, ſo too there are peculiar, and diſtinct Phyſicians. The maladies of the State, and the corruptions of the Church, muſt be purg'd by the Governours of both : and though private Subjects may condole the miſcarriages in Government, or innovations in Religion, yet they muſt not without due Power and legal Authority, turn State-menders and Church-reformers. Many things may be neceſſary, and well done if accompliſh'd by due means : ſo that we are to conſider not only the goodneſs or neceſſity of the thing, but alſo what we have to do in it. For St. Peter you ſee ranks the *Buſy-body*, with very ill Companions, *Thieves* and *Murderers* ; enough one would think to reſtrain all People, from mending what they are not concern'd in ; and to

assure them, that if they suffer as *Busy-bodies*, it is so far from dying as Christians, that it is with shame and disgrace, it being the Cause, not the Death, that gives both the Martyrdom, and the Honour. Hence St. Paul in his own justification, when he was Accused of the *Jews*, told *Felix*, that they neither found him with multitudes, nor with tumult, Act. xxiv. 18. and challenges his Accusers at *vers.* 20. if they could find any evil-doing in him. He had done nothing against their Laws nor Government, he heads no Faction, nor is concern'd in any Consults for the destruction of *Cesar*, and by these things he testifies his Religion and Innocence. No man ought to think, that he suffers with honour, who is so far from suffering for *doing well*, that he does an *Evil* to prevent that which he fears to suffer. The case *this*, of all Plotters against Government; they fear, or at least pretend some Evil to their Persons and Estates, from the unlimited Power of the Prince, and then against the Laws both of God and Man, conspire his ruin. And can these men be allowed to suffer for doing well; who dye as Criminals to the Laws both of *Heaven* and *Earth*? the Law of God requiring that no ill Action be done to prevent the greatest Suffering; and the Laws of Men condemning them as Transgressors, for doing ill. And in the mean time,

time, Christian meekness is lost too, which commands us; though we do well, and yet suffer, to take it patiently: which is my Second Proposition.

II. *When we do well, and suffer for it, we must take it patiently.* Patience it is, that makes our suffering easie; that fanns us with sweet and pleasant gales, when the fires are about us; that rocks us asleep in the midst of torments: our own impatience being the greatest trouble; both aggravating the other, and afflicting more sharply by it self. It was Christ's command to his Disciples, and in them to all Christians, speaking to them about the Persecutions of the last times, *S. Luke, xxi. 19. In Patience possess ye your Souls.* He foretold 'em what they should expect, *vers. 12.* and so onward, *to be persecuted, to be deliver'd up to the Synagogues, imprison'd, and betrayed by Kindred, by Parents, by Brethren, to be put to death, and hated of all men for his sake:* yet for all that, *in Patience possess ye your Souls.*

Now to suffer patiently, is first, to be content with what we suffer; and if once thus we were, our murmuring would cease; our grudgings were at an end; we would not revile God's High-Priest, nor speak evil of the Ruler of his People: much less, combine to remove those Princes whom our own Fret and Malice, and Ambition, only make

make uneasy. We would not stumble at straws; nor no mountains cast upon us would unsettle us; would shake our Loyalty; such is the Power, and vertue of a contented patience.

Yet that's not all. He is content with his Fortune that neither repines nor murmurs at it; this may be Heathen patience, but it is not Christian. That man only is Christianly patient, that secondly, is chearful in it; does not only quietly and serenely suffer wrong, but rejoyces in it. This, the true Martyrs patience; such as *St. Paul* speaks of the first Christians, who took joyfully the spoyling of their goods, knowing that in Heaven they had a more induring substance.

This cheerfulness sometimes works to a Resignation, sometimes arises from it; however a full Resignation of our selves into the hands of God, is always a companion of, and a necessary ingredient, and must be the third in Christian Patience. He suffers patiently, that suffers without reluctance, that is so at the dispose of the Almighty, that he has not so much as a desire, or wish within him, for any thing concerning his tribulation, or issue of it, but what it pleases God to make him; who is content to live in torment, or die in pain, or change his condition as often, and as many ways as it shall seem best to the wisdom of his Heavenly Father: this

is perfect Patience, and this is patiently to suffer as Christians.

There are who would be counted such; whom yet every thing disturbs, whom every little suffering discontents, who are always repining at superiour Powers, who upon every petty grievance, speak evil of Authority, whose hasty desires never wait God's leisure, but seek out speedy, and unlawful Remedies to themselves; and yet will needs be counted patient men, the only Martyrs. But call we this Patience to Rage against Government? Nay, and when we are justly sentenced for our faults, even then to suffer with reviling mouths, and seditious speeches! neither to trust our Deliverance to God's Providence, nor our safety to the Laws! not only to prescribe to God, means, and time, to help them; but Conspire by the most dishonourable, as well as the most wicked ways to free themselves, from such mischiefs which only their own folly and malice have created to themselves! Plotting thus against their own Peace, by needless jealousies, and then make that very jealousy, a sufficient ground to contrive the King's ruin! Certainly, these men, have other principles than what Christ left them; who being reviled, reviled not again, who when he suffered, threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; who yet had

had full power to have judg'd them himself: only that he might leave us an Example, how to behave our selves when men oppress us, to be content when men oppress us, to be content with it, chearful under it, and refer the rest to God. And this will make way for my third Proposition:

III. *If we do well, we will rather suffer patiently, than take revenge upon, or resist the Power which God has set over us.* If the Authority be just, Obedience is necessary; not always to do what is commanded, for it may be Evil; and then God must be obey'd, not man: yet to man, so much Obedience, even in that, is due, as to submit patiently to the penalty is inflicted on us, though it be unjust.

Indeed naturally, every man has a Right of Resistance, to repell an Injury from himself: yet this his private power, for peace and quiet sake, is restrain'd with bounds by that Superiors power under which he is. So that being a Member of a Common-wealth, or Kingdom, he has no Resistance lawfull, permitt'd to him, but what is indulg'd or commanded to him by the Law under which he lives; which certainly denies him any resistance of the supreme Power it self, be it what it will; else were there no way left to quiet any time the Seditious, or con-
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serve the publick peace, neither could the Majesty of the supreme Authority be defended, were there left to the Subjects a liberty to gainsay, or withstand, much less to resist it : whence it comes, that there are so many cautelous, and even scrupulous Laws, invented by *Parliament*, to keep the Person, and Power, and Dignity, of the supreme Governour Sacred and Inviolable.

Therefore as to that pretence, that by nature we have a freedom to withstand force, by force, and may deliver our selves by the destruction of that Power which would enslave us ; it is to be consider'd. That in all establish'd Governments the People have devested themselves from the rights and practices of those Liberties, and Defences, which otherwise they might make, and enjoy. For because it was soon found out that every single man would be a Prey to any other that was stronger than himself, therefore all people thought it necessary to combine themselves into Societies, and unite their Strength by putting it all into the hand of one man, who should defend all the rest. Now the *Conclusion* from hence is ; if the power of defending, and revenging of wrongs, be committed by the People, to one Man, for the ends of Government, then this Power is given from themselves, and stated in the Supreme, there to remain. The same natural

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reason that makes Government necessary, making it as necessary that the Governour be obeyed: but then he cannot be judg'd, nor he must not be resisted; for the Supreme cannot be both above and under the People: but it is so, if the People can avenge their own wrongs; for that which avenges must also be supreme; which because in no Monarchy the People are, therefore they must be quiet, and patient; for how can they right themselves against him whom they cannot call to judgement?

The very Heathens saw this necessary subjection without any other light than what Nature gave them. *Principi summum imperium Dii dederunt, subditis obsequia gloria relicta est*, says *Tacitus*. The divine Power has given the supreme Arbitrament of all things to the Prince, the only glory left to Subjects is Obedience. *Æquum atq; iniquum Regis imperium feras*. *Seneca*. The Kings Command, be it just or unjust, must be suffer'd. Ἀρχῆς εἶναι, is all the reason *Æuripides* gave in this case, Governours they are, and therefore must be obeyed.

Nor was Passive Obedience due only to the supreme Magistrate, but to all the rest proportionably, to inferiour Governours, to Fathers, and Masters. It was Roman Law, *Miles qui castigare volenti Centurioni resisterit, si vitæ tenuit, militiam mutat*

mutat, si ex industria fregit, vel manum Centurioni intulit, capite punitur. That Souldier which resists his Captain when he comes to beat him for his faults, if he lay hold upon his Commander's Cudgel, shall be presently discarded, but if he break it, or lay hold upon him, he shall die for it. *Aristotle* though he spoke not Law, spoke the ground of it, when he said, *Ἐὶ ἀρχῇ ἔχον ἑταίραξεν ὃ δὲ ὀμπληγῶναι;* If a Magistrate strike us, we must not strike again. And *Cicero* for our Parents says the same: *Non modo reticere homines parentum injurias, sed etiam æquo animo ferre oportet,* We must bear our Parents injuries with silence and patience; so natural Piety does enjoin us: Servants were bound to a more strict obedience to their Masters by the Civil-Laws, which are nothing else but Conclusions deduced from the Principles of Natural Reason, and are in this, back'd by the Judicial. Thus even Nature taught them, which yet makes all equal, but however born to be obedient to the state, wherein they are to be.

And all this is but reason, for the inferiour having either by voluntary Choice as *Servants*, or by Natural descent as *Children*, or by condition of state or succession as *Subjects*, given up their right of all, and the dispose of themselves to the wisdom and discretion of their Governors,

have no reason to resist their Commands and Injunctions, because in so doing they contradict themselves : first willing and desiring one thing in their supreme Governour, (who is virtually each of them) and then the contrary by a new affection of their own.

'Tis requisite therefore that one of these be repeal'd, the first is not now in our power to do, 'tis out of our hand, without a limitation. The second therefore we must correct, either by submitting to what the other shall think just, or by suffering for transgressing it, when we cannot do it with a safe and quiet Conscience.

Yet in all this, with St. *Augustine's* order, *Si aliquid jusserit Curator, faciendum, non tamen si contra Proconsul jubeat ; aut si Consul aliquid jubeat, & aliud Imperator, non utique contemnitis potestatem, sed eligis majori servire* : If an inferiour Magistrate command, we must Obey ; yet if the superiour injoy the contrary, we must suffer the inferiour's violence against us ; but do what the superiour bids us.

But I leave Nature and Reason, because men have forgot them, and I might upon the same account omit *Scripture* also, but it is the Word of *Eternal Truth*, and we must not slightly pass over it. And in it how read we ? In the Old Testament, at the first institution of Kings,

I. Sam.

1 Sam. 8. 11. when he had told them *how their King should use them, usurp upon their Land and Vineyards, and Wives and Children, and take of them what he pleased,* What then? shall they lift up themselves, and stir against him? No, *ye shall cry out in that day for the King which ye have chosen you.* vers. 18.

There is all the remedy you have in case of his Tyranny and Oppression, to cry out in that day unto the Lord. And it is strange if any License of Resistance was ever granted by Almighty God, that in a People so obstinate, so ready to perverseness, as the *Jews*, we never read of any Party that rose up against their Kings, (though wicked and ungodly) to vindicate themselves from their unjust Grievances; which must needs arise by the Idolatry of such who Rul'd over them; unless such who were peculiarly Authoriz'd from Heaven, or such whose Actions are Recorded for History, and Testimony of God's Providence in suffering them, not of his Testimony in approving them.

Nay more; the very Idols of the Heathens, how grievous soever to the devout and pious Souls, were not demolish'd by any private hand, they were fain to suffer it, it being not justly in their power to do otherwise. And you may read of the indiscreet Zeal of a Christian Bishop
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who against the Emperours Command or Toleration, throwing down an Idols Temple, was the occasion of a violent persecution. God is a God of Order, and would have none go beyond their bounds, but do their duty, and commit the rest to his wiser disposal.

But however not to resist, for that of all the rest is incompatible with Suffering, *You must therefore needs be subject*, Rom. xiii. 5. For to say no more, *whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* It is in vain to say more, being so plain to any man to understand, that seriously thinks of a Day of Judgment; when all the dawbing of *Liberty*, and *Property*, and *Religion*, shall be wiped off, and no pretence nor distinction satisfie against the Evidence of Truth, and so plain expressions.

And if you please to have any more of God's mind, you shall see in *Scripture*, that He is so tender of Kings, that not only they shall not be ill used, but not so much as ill thought, or spoke of, *Eecl. x. 10. Curse not the King, no not in thy thought.* Nay, and to prevent all Rebellion from shrouding it self under the new invented terms of *Heats* and *Stirs*, God himself has declared, *Provr. xxx. 31. Where the word of a King is there is power, and who can say unto him*
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What doest thou? Against him there is no rising up.

This perhaps all men will agree to, but when the Prince is evil, and does wrong, invades Property, and intrenches upon Liberty, or indangers our Religion. For what then? Why the Rule in Scripture relates to such Princes that are suppos'd to be Evil; for no man will Curse him whom he thinks to be good and gracious; but be he never so Evil, Curse him not, no not in thy Mind, much less with thy Tongue, and then to be sure to do him no harm with thy Hand, when thou must not so much as intend, or wish it in thy Thought. *Resist not Evil* is our Saviour's injunction, *Mat. v. 39.* we must hurt no man, nay not that man from whom we receive hurt; for no man must be his own Avenger. If a private hand does me an Injury, I have no way to defend my self, but by the Magistrate and by the Law. But then if my Prince does me Evil, how shall I render Evil back to him? It must be by some Power superiour to his, but that is none but Gods. Here therefore *St. Paul's* Rule comes in, *Rom. xii. 37.* *Not to render Evil for Evil, but to give place to wrath,* that is, to the Divine Vengeance. Evil Princes are to be referred to that; and to this agree our Laws, declaring, *That the King receives his Power only from Gods hand,*
and!

and therefore he is accountable only at His Tribunal.

Well ; but then the People are but in an ill-condition : for if Kings who are for our defence shall turn Wolves, and destroy us; instead of being Nursing-Fathers, shall eat up their Children; if against Law, they shall impose upon our Liberties and our Consciences, and not allow a legal freedom in our Estates, and Religion, what then? why! the question still is, whether they be Kings, or not? For if they be supreme, we cannot controul, nor correct what is above us. Our present remedy is Patience, and we must leave all the rest to God's Care and Punishment; for we our selves are tyed up, and we must not resist.

And say, there is any Case in which we might; what Case is that? I hope we shall not admit it in all; but then if you admit but one, that will be as bad, for seditious People will be sure their Case shall be that. And if in any case at all, it must be certainly in the Case of Religion; and here indeed all our Rebels croud in. Ay, but the *Scriptures* which teach our Religion, will not allow it in that Case neither: For even then, when the Emperours persecuted Christianity, and lived upon Blood, and satisfied both their Malice and their Pleasure in the death of Christians: Yet still says St. *Paul*, ye must
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be subject, and ye must not resist, for that will be your damnation; and you had better dye *Martyrs* than *Rebells*. Upon this reason the Christians always laid down their weapons, and lifted up their hands in Prayer, threw away their Swords and took up the Cross, and fought for no Crowns but those of Martyrdom.

Yet still, we hope we may be concerned for the *Publick*, not that we have any private quarrels against the King, or particular designs to make our selves great; but however as *Patriots* of the People, and *Representatives* of our Countrey, we must prevent mischief, and not suffer the Common-Wealth to be destroyed: and therefore it may be more adviseable to cut off a dangerous Prince, than leave it in his election and power to destroy *Liberty*, and *Property*, and *Religion*. By this specious pretence it is, that our *Protestant Dissenters* cover, and defend their malicious purposes: not remembring the Christian Rule given by *St. Paul*, *Rom. iii. 8.* *Not to do Evil that Good may come of it.* Those mischiefs which we fear hereafter, if they cannot lawfully be diverted, must be entertain'd whenever they shall happen, with patience and submission: and, as in that, there is more Christianity, so too more Prudence, and a nobler Courage; for thus we preserve the present Peace, leave future things to the dispo-

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sitions of *Providence*, and our own preservation, to the *Laws* and an harmless *Innocence*. We have a sort of hot-headed Republicans, reprobating the Rights of the King, and the noblest Subject, by a kind of *absolute* and *irrespective* Decree, against Religion, Common-justice, and the *Laws*; not considering in the least, the fatal consequences, and horrid injustice; so they can but wreck their malice upon the best of Kings, and the most generous of Brothers! But *allowing* those things by which they would blacken them; are we to preserve *that* which they call *Protestant Religion*, (a composition of so many, that in the whole mass it is none at all) against all the Rules we are to take from our common Christianity, as well as natural Justice? *Not to do Evil that Good may come of it*, is the direction of our *Bible*; not to put that upon another which we would not endure that others should put upon us, is the Rule of *Equity*; and not to set the Nation into a present flame, for fear hereafter a tempestuous Prince should Govern it, is I presume, a conclusion from *Policy*. And though *Self-preservation* be a very dear Principle, yet certainly not to be pursued by the violation of those Rights that are establish'd by Divine and Humane *Laws*.

These are the things that we have so long, and so justly complain'd of in the *Tenets and Practices* of our Adversaries of *Rome* : but whilst we thus fear, and strive, and cry out against *Popery*, shall we our selves maintain one of the saddest points of it ; in our Affronting, Opposing, and Conspiring against Kings ? glorying so long in the *Word* Protestant, till we altogether disclaim the Christian ; and by a pretence of Zeal against one Religion, become a scandal, and a shame to all ! For as to Government you cannot tell me which is worst, the *Romanist* or the *Dissenter* : for if the King be inferiour to the *Pope*, as the *Jesuits*, or to the *Presbytery* and *People*, as the other do affirm ; it is but charging him with misdemeanors in Government, and then setting up the *Pastoral-Staff* of *St. Peter*, or the *Standard* of *Christ*, and you may call him to an account with *Sword* and *Blunderbuss*, and yet be Innocent. Thus the Scepter of the Prince, be it under the Keys of *St. Peter*, or the Kirk of *St. Andrew*, shall be Depos'd by every proud *Priest* or pragmatistical *Presbyter* ; and it will be all one to the Monarchy which prevails, the *Pope* or the *Faction*. Nor is it any great matter what our *People* call themselves, or of what Church they are ; for I am sure if they be Rebels, they cannot be good Christians. Therefore I was always of Opinion,

that those men who can think it lawful to fight against their Prince, were the rankest Hypocrites in their pretences to Religion : for such whose Consciences are Armour of proof against the plain demonstration of duty, will stick at no other sin, when their Ambition or Interest, invites them to it. I have therefore continually wonder'd how such, as might easily be observed both to speak and practise ill things against the Government, could ever be thought to be Sober, and Pious People : remembring that when St. Jude was giving an account of base and wicked men, as a part of their Character tells us, they *despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities* ; which as he makes the mark of a prophane and wicked person, so the Apostle aggravates it, by observing that it is an using the Prince worse than St. Michael would the Devil, *against whom he brought no railing accusation.* To which meek and Christian temper we shall the sooner be persuaded by considering the last Proposition.

IV. *That to do well, and suffer patiently, is incumbent upon us, by the Religion we profess.* To this we are call'd, to do well, and yet suffer, to do well though we suffer, to suffer patiently, nay and to choose to suffer, rather than resist, or rise up.

It is Cowardise, not Christianity to desist from doing well, for fear of suffering evil ; nor are dangers or undoing, or death it self, Pleas sufficient to excuse us from the performance of what is just and good : for this, says *S. Peter*, is *the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* *vers.* 15, 16. *as free, but not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness but as the Servants of God ;* that is, as those who are called to imitate the Patience of a Crucified Lord and Master. Christ gave his Disciples the exactest Rule of Patience, say the *Ancient Fathers*, not only, not to resist, but not to seem to go about it ; and from this place in the Text, and *vers.* 12. 13, 14, 15, 16. of the Fourth Chapter they gather it, and to Christs Example they conform it ; whose Example is propounded to us in the following verses ; who exalted also every vertue, and therefore this of Patience and Obedience, to their just perfection, and so enjoyns it to his Disciples. This made the Christian Church grow up to its height and splendour ; for it was not the Sword of Fighting Men, but the Bloud of Patient Christians, that spread the Name of Christ, and so gloriously defended it ; it being the Christians Principle to Suffer for his Name, not fight for it, but to be sure rather to Suffer, than Rebell.

And

And if you ask the first times of Christianity, both their Actions and Words express as much. The *Thebaean* Legion consisting of near *Seven Thousand* Christians, when the Emperour *Maximinian*, under pain of death, commanded them to Sacrifice to Idols, what did they? they stood not upon their guard, though they could easily have done it, but suffered themselves to be decimated by the hands of some few Executioners sent on purpose, and after that they threw down their weapons, and submitted their Necks and unarmed Bodies, to the Sword of the Tyrant. *Hoc solum reminiscetes*, (says the Story) *se illum confiteri, qui nec reclamando ad occisionem ductus est*, only remembring this, that they confessed themselves to be his Disciples, *who was led like a Lamb dumb before his shearers, who did not open his mouth*. And we read of as great a number under *Valens* the *Arrian* Emperour, who without any resistance, submitted themselves to his Fury and Violence.

Nor was it as the Author of *Julian* pretends (though against all the faith of History) that in these Examples there wanted power of Resistance; and *Tertullian* tells the Emperour as much, *Externi sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, &c. cui bello non idonei, non prompti fuissimus, etiam copiis impares; qui tam libenter trucidamur*

damur, si non apud istam disciplinam, magis occidiciret, quam occidere. What Armies (says he) were we not sufficient to grapple with, though we were fewer, who are yet so willingly slain, if by our Religion it were not more lawful to suffer, and be kill'd, rather than to kill others, by defending our selves. S. Cyprian says as much: and *Laſtantiuſ* thus expreſſes Patience : *Ideo cum tam nefanda perpetimur, ne verbo quidem reluctamur, ſed Deo remittimus ultionem.* When we ſuffer ſuch horrible things, we do not ſo much as reſiſt them in words, but commit the revenge only to God. Thus they choſe to ſuffer, and thought themſelves called thereunto by their Religion.

And if we would be truly Chriſtians, this muſt be our temper, this our practice. And I hope in what concerns our duty, whether to God, or Man, we ſhall take our meaſures from Chriſt, and primitive Religion, and not from ſuch hot and rebellious Zealots, who with God in their mouths will violate all that is ſacred and juſt, in their actions.

I would only ſay one thing more. Here is an horrible Plot diſcovered, againſt the Life of the King, and *His Royal Highneſſ* : and this calls upon us all who have but an ordinary kindneſſ, and reſpect to His Maſtey and the Government, for

two duties: The *First* is, to pay unto God, an hearty Acknowledgment for his tender and particular Providence over the King, and indeed in him, over us all, since in his Preservation, we enjoy our Lives, and Estates, our Liberties, and Religion. The other duty is, to set a mark upon those Men, and such Principles, which would have murdered the best of Kings, and the most Loyal part of the Nation, under a pretence of defending *Liberty*, and *Protestant-Religion*. How far this wretched Plot it self, is believed, or whether believed to be the Plot of those Men against whom it is both Charged, and Proved, I cannot say; but this I will say, that the Practice of what they would have done, is so like, what by their Preachers they are taught to do, that if we do but consider by whom the *Dissenters* are led, it is no wonder at all to find them so ready to do mischief.

And as I was saying at first, that their Principles do so naturally tend to Rebellion, that they can never be made good Subjects, but by renouncing their Masters, and their Doctrines; So I now add, that if there be any one of them that is kind to the Government, it is the goodness more of his Nature than Persuasion, if they do believe their own Guides. I shall instance but in a few, but those few, such as were notoriously
active

active in the destruction of the *Royal Martyr*, and have been Teachers of the People in Conventicles since the Return of his present Majesty.

Mr. *Calamy*, in a Speech at *Guild-Hall*, upon the calling in of the *Scots* to assist the Rebellion, to encourage so Pious a Cause, did assure his *Auditors*, that had he himself as many Lives as Hairs upon his Head, he would Sacrifice all in that Quarrel. A blessed President for a factious People ! Nay, and as to that very Principle upon which this wicked Plot was grounded, (*viz.*) the pretence of preserving *Liberty* and *Religion*, he delivers his Opinion, That for *Peace* and *Reformation*, it is commendable to Fight against the King's Command. *Pag. 29. Theses.* The *Pope* in his Chair could not have determin'd more magisterially, nor to more mischievous purposes : And indeed the *Jesuit* and the *Presbyterian*, proceed by the same measures ; for to gain the People to Fight against their Prince, they will at any time make over to them, the Sovereignty : And then as Mr. *Calamy* asserts, all Loyal Subjects (as now it is pretended) are the betrayers of Religion, and Liberty ; and those (says he) that fought under the King's Banner, did endeavour, by all bloody and traiterous ways, to subvert Religion and Property. So that here is Treason found in the King, against his Sovereign

E

Lord

Lord the People ! Therefore he declares the Rebellion to be so much God's Cause, that whoever dyed in it, would dye a Martyr. *Sermon to the Peers.*

Mr. *Jenkins*, another of the same holy stamp, after the War which he had Preach'd up, was ended, and he had leisure to calculate the Thousands, both of Men and Money, consumed upon that fatal occasion, and had also weigh'd the King's Blood, and all his Subjects that had been Murder'd, against the *Covenant*, he sets down his Opinion at the foot of the Account, that the removal of the King, and Bishops, was a sufficient payment for all the Blood and Treasure that had been spent in those distractions. So that it is no wonder at all, that these men value not the blood of Kings, nor their People ; *Reformation* and *Protestant-Religion*, will answer for it all. And for that, you shall hear Mr. *Baxter* too, (who has still the guidance of Consciences, and is Master of a Conventicle) declaring, That where Religion and Liberty, are the question, it is not to be question'd at all, but that the King, and all that adhere to him may be murder'd. Upon this account perhaps, he declares to the whole World by way of boast, that he had Preach'd Thousands into the War, and that his own being engaged in it, was the greatest outward

outward Service he ever perform'd to God. *Pag.*
 141. H.^c Nay, and lays down that infamous
 as well as Treasonable Principle; That if he had
 taken up Arms against the Parliament, his Con-
 science tells him he had been a Traytor. A rare
 Christian Conscience, for a Preacher of Christ,
 and one that had taken the Oath of Allegiance,
 to declare it to be Treason to defend his Liege
 Lord. But this Gentleman was better read in
Scripture than our *Laws*; and indeed one would
 think so, that shall see him urge all those Texts
 of it, that were intended for lawful Governours,
 to press Obedience to the usurped Powers; *those*
 he said, could not be resisted without damnation,
 but the King might for Loyalty in this Man's
 Divinity, is the unpardonable Transgression. For
 Rebellion against the King, he thinks, needs no
 Repentance, or no Mercy, and therefore, (says
 he) having searched into the matter of *Fact*, as
 to my concernment in the War, I am so far
 from Repenting, that I could not forbear doing
 the same, under the same circumstances. And
 truly Custom in this matter is a very fine thing,
 he that has practised so well against one Prince,
 can tell how the better to deal with another.

And as to Princes in general, the late Dr. *Owen*,
 that had so many Disciples at his feet, has de-
 clar'd, That when Kings command unrighteous
 things,

things, and their Subjects do obey them, no doubt but the destruction of them both is just, and righteous. And it is no doubt if these *Casuists* could determine it as readily by the *Sword*, as with their *Pens*. And though indeed they have Hypocrisie, and Impudence, equal to their Wickedness, and would bear the World in hand, that they are Harmless and Innocent, yet from them it is that the *Easie* and the *Zealous*, are taught to despise Government, and put in practice the worst Principles of their Masters. I need not instance in any more particulars, *Calvin*, and *Beza*, *Knox* and *Buchanan*, have taught the whole Herd of Dissenters such horrible things, that as they themselves have manag'd them, have in all Nations prov'd to the continual disturbance of the Peace, and to the Murder of a great many Princes, as does appear in History. And indeed the first Man in Story, that spake evil of Kings, was a Separatist. *St. Ambrose* tells us of *Lucifer Caralitanus*, who spoke hard things of *Constantine* the *Arrian Emperour*; but the Father observes, that he was one that did Separate from Church-Communion. After that, the *Papas* of *Rome*, and with them since have joyn'd the *Presbitery*, both the one and the other, having declined from *Primitive Piety*, fell off from their Loyalty also, and reckon it no Sin, to Curse or Rebell against their

their Prince. But in all the first times of Religion, for some hundreds of Years, the Christians by their Books, and by their Blood, gave Testimony that Kings are in no case to be Conspired against or Resisted. Hence *Tertullian* tells us for the honour of Christianity, that when there was a Rebellion made against a Bloudy, and a Cruel *Emperour*, out of pretence for Religion, and the *Publick-Good*, the Christians then would not be insnared into Evil by the glorious Baits of *Liberty* and *Religion*.

And to conclude, Christ never gave any other Rules than what are in the Text, *Obedience* and *Patience*, the one when the Prince commands as he should, and the other when he commands what he ought not. And thus we either obeying or suffering like Christians, shall dye like such, and He that calls us to Grace, will one day bring us to Glory, and Crown both our Doings and our Sufferings, with Peace and Glory, and Immortality.

F I N I S.